

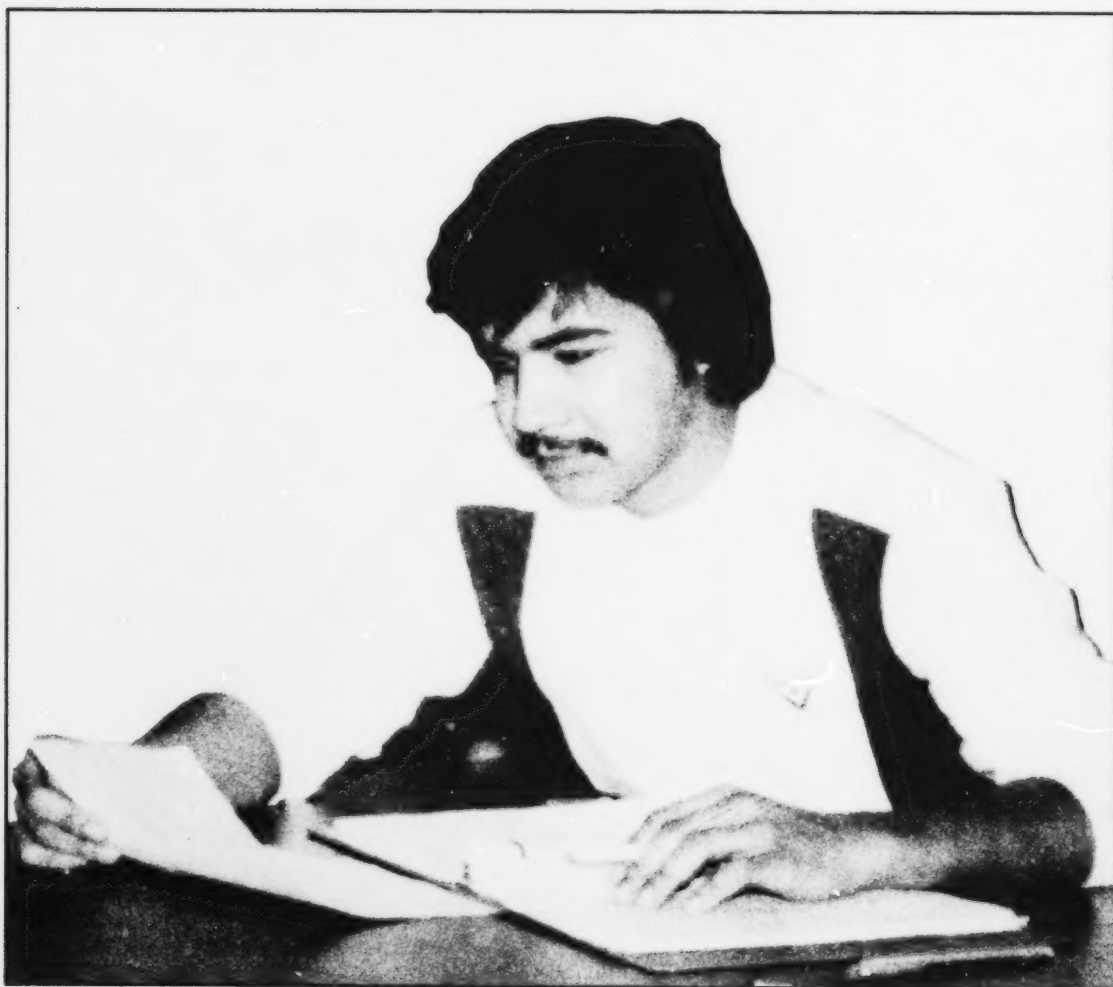


**Saskatchewan
Advanced
Education and
Manpower**

**Community
Colleges
Branch**

1985-86 Report

Non-Status Indian and Metis (N.S.I.M.) Program



November, 1986

87-01149/

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is a continuation of an evaluation of the NSIM program begun in August, 1984.

Besides presenting the results of a student follow-up carried out on '84 - '85 students in March of 1986, the report identifies academic outcomes for '85 - '86, presents reasons for students' discontinuing, and some financial information.

Of note is an almost ten percent improvement in the attendance and/or retention rate, which is attributed to increasing the quality of support to students, as well as attention to selection and placement.

The report makes just three recommendations, the first two reiterated from the December, 1985, report on the program.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: That the Department explore the possibility of computerizing all student training records (p. 10).

Recommendation 2: That student records in the Department provide for identifying student progress at grades below the ten level, and that students' achievement at those grades be suitably recognized (p. 10).

Recommendation 3: That colleges continue to attend to the factors reducing the discontinuation rate (p. 16).

I. INTRODUCTION

In December, 1985, Colleges Branch of the Department of Advanced Education and Manpower produced a report evaluating the Non-Status Indian and Metis program for 1984 - 85.

A major component of the report documented the non-academic outcomes of the program, based on interviews with students, student questionnaires, and instructors' assessments.

The present report does not repeat that research, but is based almost entirely on student and financial records.

In 1985 - 86 the provincial NSIM Program budget was increased to accommodate a ten percent increase in training allowances, as well as the introduction of a modest travel allowance. The latter is intended to facilitate students in neighboring communities to gather in one location, sometimes making training possible, sometimes making it more cost-effective.

The one and glaring negative in the 1985 - 86 program year was the irregular and frequently late arrival of training allowance cheques. Colleges reported students having to discontinue because of the problems created. Students wondered why their cheque could not be regular, like everyone else's pay cheque. We recommended college administration of the cheques.

An important finding of this report is that, while the number of student registrations increased only marginally over '84 - '85 (1196 vs 1149), the actual attended training days increased by almost ten percent. The improved attendance and retention rate can be attributed to increased attention, by colleges, to entry considerations such as selection and orientation, and to counselling and support for students in their programs.

The attendance and/or occupancy rate, measured by amount of training allowance paid, ranged from a high of 93.7% to a low of 47.2%. Rural colleges tend to have a lower ratio of attended to approved training days, because in many rural communities there is no wait list, so that if a student discontinues, the training place remains vacant to the end of the program.

Table 1.1 shows the distribution of registrations, for the past three years, by college region;

Table 1.2 shows the number of attended training days, for the past two years, in each college.

TABLE 1.1
TOTAL NUMBER OF NSIM STUDENTS BY COLLEGE REGION,
APRIL 1, 1985 to MARCH 31, 1986

<u>Community Colleges</u>	<u>1983-84</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>1984-85</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>1985-86</u>	<u>%</u>
Carlton Trail	18	2.0	12	1.0	12	1.0
Coteau Range	13	1.4	14	1.2	32	2.7
Cumberland	52	5.7	55	4.8	75	6.3
Cypress Hills	0	0	15	1.3	16	1.3
Lakeland	19	2.1	17	1.5	21	1.8
Mistikwa	208	22.9	274	23.9	232	19.4
Parkland	66	7.3	74	6.4	81	6.8
Prairie West	37	4.1	30	2.6	32	2.7
Prince Albert	362	39.9	276	24.0	320	26.8
Regina Plains	74	8.1	139	12.1	163	13.6
Saskatoon Region	17	1.9	178	15.5	139	11.6
South East Region	42	4.6	65	5.7	73	6.1
	—	—	—	—	—	—
	908	100.0	1149	100.0	1196	100.0

TABLE 1.2
 NUMBER OF ATTENDED¹ TRAINING DAYS BY COLLEGE REGION,
 APRIL 1, 1985 to MARCH 31, 1986

<u>Community Colleges</u>	<u>1984-85</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>1985-86</u>	<u>%</u>
Carlton Trail	890	1.5	484	0.7
Coteau Range	1226	2.1	1388	1.9
Cumberland	4816	8.2	5050	6.8
Cypress Hills	789	1.4	1071	1.4
Lakeland	1268	2.2	1321	1.8
Mistikwa	13,117	22.4	11,468	15.3
Parkland	5,387	9.2	5,857	7.8
Prairie West	2,140	3.7	2,084	2.8
Prince Albert	10,733	18.3	23,326 ²	31.2
Regina Plains	7,156	12.2	10,007	13.4
Saskatoon Region	7,024	12.0	8,909	11.9
South East	4,050	6.9	3,8853	5.2
	58,598	100.0	74,818	100.0

NOTES:

1. The number of attended training days is derived from the amount of training allowance paid.
2. On April 1, 1985, the ABE program formerly part of the P.A.V.C. was transferred to PARCC, which accounts for the disproportionate increase from one year to the next.

The report provides: 1) information on 1985-86 students and academic outcomes; 2) financial information; 3) an update on recommendations made in the December, 1985 report (Appendix B); and, 4) the results of a follow-up study of 1984-85 NSIM students in college ABE programs (see Appendix A).

II. 1985 - 86 STUDENTS

Student Profile

The age of NSIM students has not changed significantly over the past three years. Table 2.1 indicates that the largest age group is 21-30 (41.8%). The group aged 20 and under is down slightly from 1984-85 (from almost 35% to 29%). Only 1.8 percent of the population was 51 years of age and older.

Over the past three years, as shown in Table 2.1, there has been a small but consistent increase in the percentages of age groups between 21 and 50.

The past three years show a gradual increase in the proportion of female to male students, from 57.8% females in '83 - '84 to 61.3% in '85 - '86 (see Table 2.2).

Saskatoon Region Community College breaks the pattern with more male than female students (55% vs 45%).

Table 2.2 shows, as well, a slow but steady increase in the proportion of single students to married, even though the students are slightly older.

TABLE 2.1

AGE OF NSIM STUDENTS ON ENTERING COLLEGE PROGRAMS

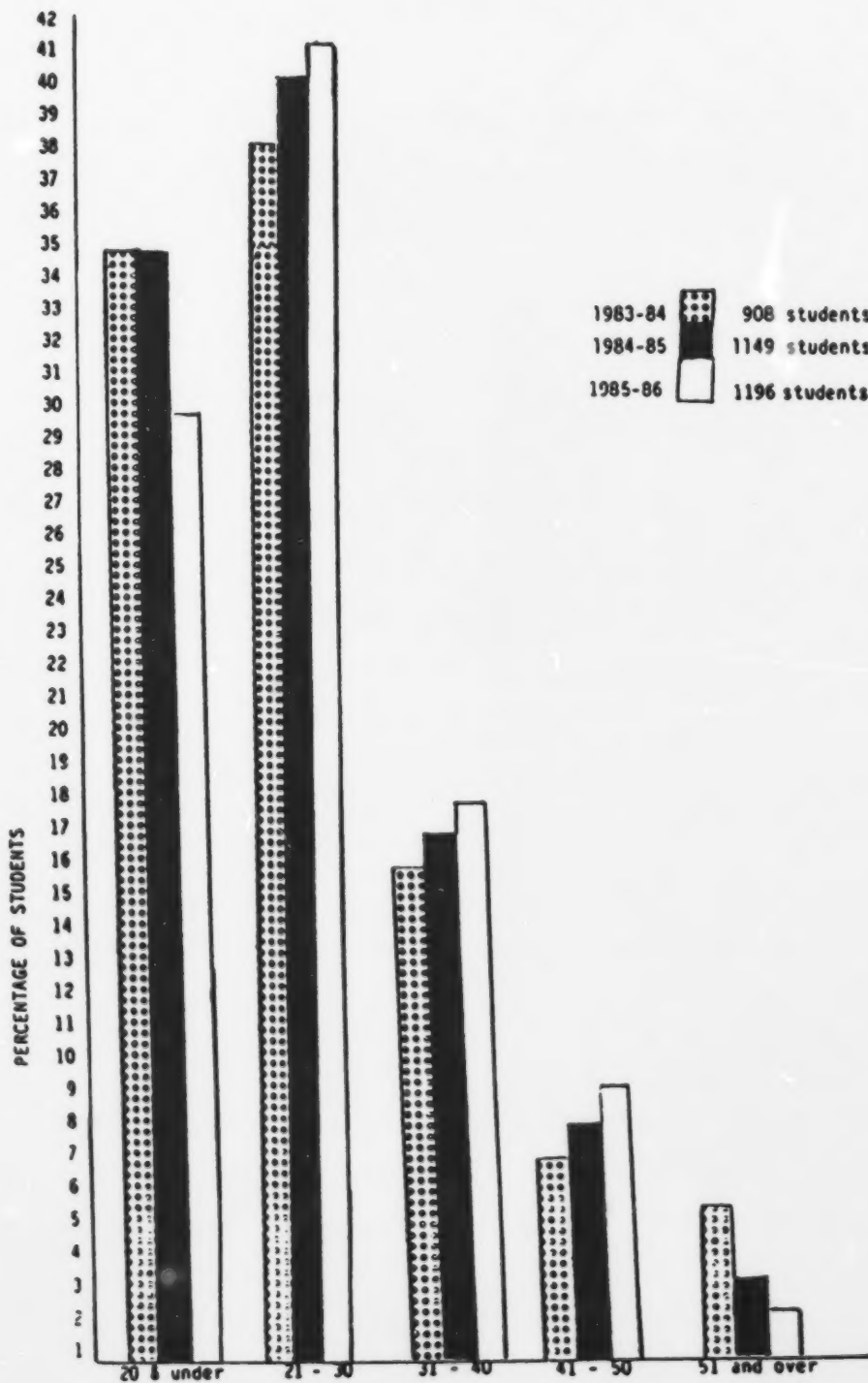
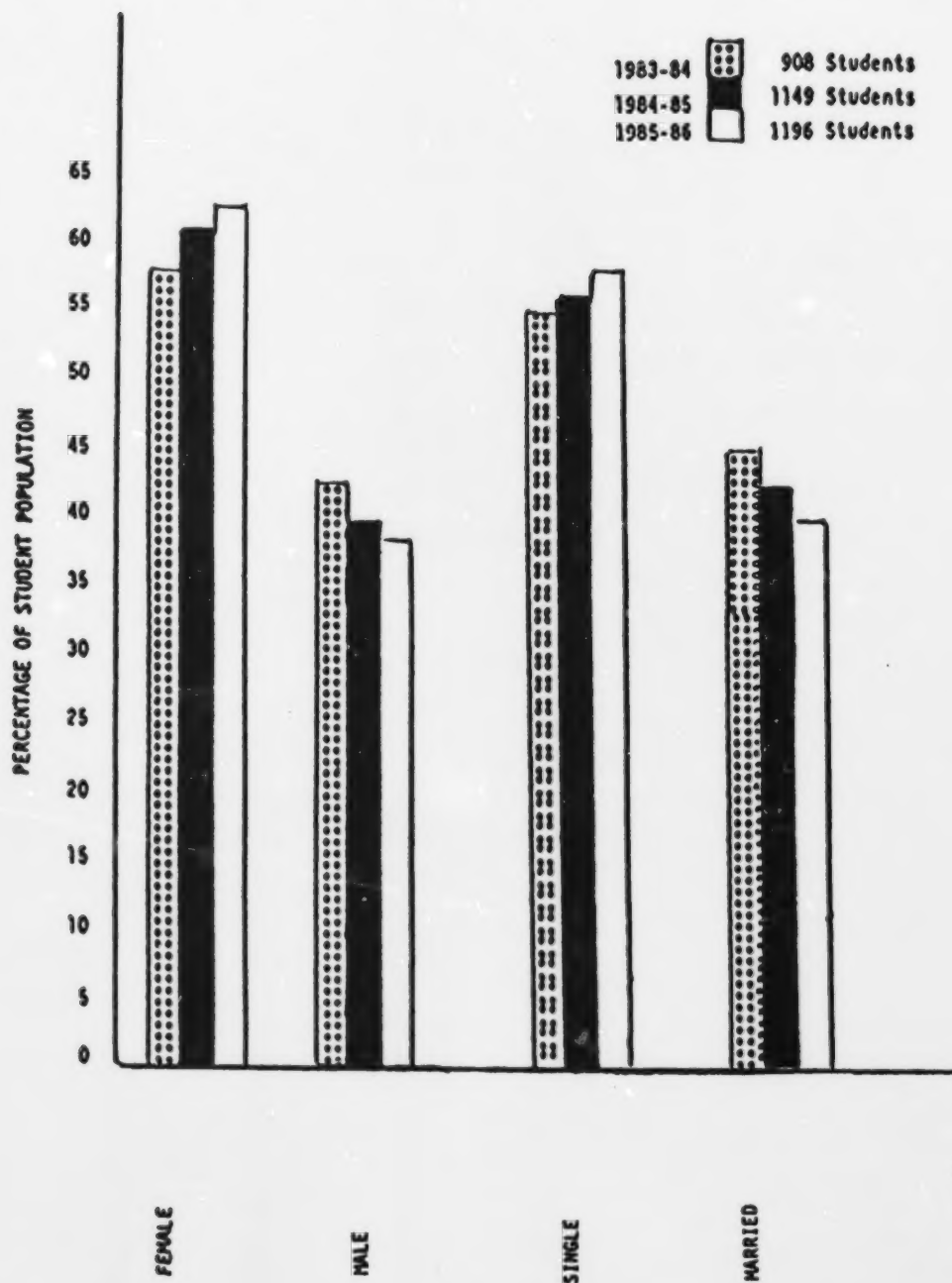


TABLE 2.2
SEX AND MARITAL STATUS OF HS/II STUDENTS



Academic Outcomes

As noted in the introduction, we have not repeated last year's research on the non-academic outcomes of the program. Our December 1985 report demonstrated the growth in self-confidence, improved self-image, enhanced work skills, etc., based on students' and instructors' assessments.

A considerable portion of the Adult Basic Education funded by the NSIM program, moreover, is non-academic. There are, for example, life skills, urban life skills, job skills, and job readiness training programs which tend to include little academic training.

In 1985 - 86 we were able to retrieve 822 permanent training records for NSIM students, an increase of fifty-six percent over '84 - '85.

Colleges are almost wholly responsible for this improvement, by more conscientiously indicating sponsorship.

We should note two recommendations in our December, 1985 report which have not yet been implemented:

1. Student training records in the Department are not yet computerized. Extracting information from them manually is not only labour intensive, but limited in scope.

2. We have no consistent reporting of grade levels achieved below the ten. This causes two problems: it means students' collective achievement is not recorded and is, therefore, understated; students who come into the program at the Grade Five level and accomplish a Nine are recorded as achieving nothing. The second problem has to do with providing students themselves with records of achievement. Some colleges issue their own certificates for grades below ten, others do not.

Recommendation 1: That the Department explore the possibility of computerizing all student training records.

Recommendation 2: That student records in the Department provide for identifying student progress at grades below the ten level, and that students' achievement at those grades be suitably recognized.

Of the 822 permanent training records we were able to retrieve, 477 students were in 5 - 10 programs, in which we included such variations as 5 - 12 -- common in rural communities because of limited numbers of students. 226 were in 11 - 12 programs. 119 students were in 1 - 4 and non-academic programs such as life skills.

Table 2.3 indicates that 54.9% of those in 11 - 12 completed a grade 11 or 12. Twenty-five percent of those in 5 - 10 completed a grade 10.

The difference in completion between the 11 - 12 and the 5 - 10 students is not surprising, because of the low academic level at which students tend to enter the 5 - 10. Fifty-seven percent of students entering a 5 - 10 program have completed the fifth grade or less.

Eighty-nine of the 5 - 10 students (18.7%) acquired a partial ten, while eighty-seven 11 - 12 students (38.5%) gained a partial 11 or 12.

TABLE 2.3
NSIM STUDENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT 1985 - 86

PROGRAM	NUMBER OF <u>STUDENTS</u>	NUMBER COMPLETING <u>GRADE</u>	% <u> </u>	NUMBER PARTIAL <u>GRADE</u>	% <u> </u>	TOTAL <u> </u>	% <u> </u>
5 - 10	477	120	25.2	89	18.7	209	43.8
11 - 12	226	124	54.9	87	38.5	211	93.4

Table 2.4 expresses the data in another form, allowing comparison with 1984 - 85. A modestly higher rate of achievement is recorded in 1985 - 86 over 1984 - 85.

TABLE 2.4
NSIM STUDENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

PROGRAM	1984 - 85		1985 - 86	
	NO. of STUDENTS	% of 526	NO. of STUDENTS	% of 822
Grade 10 complete	80	15.2	120	14.6
Grade 11 complete	29	5.5	75	9.1
Grade 12 complete	<u>14</u>	<u>2.7</u>	<u>49</u>	<u>6.0</u>
Total Complete	123	23.4	244	29.7
Grade 10 partial	35	6.7	89	10.8
Grade 11 partial	50	9.5	75	9.1
Grade 12 partial	<u>11</u>	<u>2.1</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>1.5</u>
Total Partial	96	18.3	176	21.4
TOTAL (complete	—	—	—	—
or partial)	219	41.7	420	51.1

There were, besides, 91 students (11.1%) who successfully completed a non-academic program, and 72 who were caught incomplete at the end of the program. Recognition for the creditable level of achievement must be given to the students, who overcome considerable odds; to instructors and counsellors, who support and facilitate the students' achievements, and to college coordinators who have shown initiative in upgrading the system.

Reasons for Discontinuing

We had intended, in our 1984-85 evaluation, to learn something about the reasons for students discontinuing from programs. To that end we revised the Completion, Discontinuation, Withdrawal Report, providing for identifying the reason.

Personnel who completed the reports, however, were not only insufficiently informed, but in some cases were also provided with old forms. We had, unfortunately, no information from that source.

In 1985 - 86, we have much better results, with colleges fairly consistently providing the reason for discontinuing, when known.

Of a total 404 students who discontinued, the reason is indicated for 271 (67.1%). The 133 students (32.9%) for whom there is no reason for discontinuing are, we assume, those who simply don't show up and can't be contacted by college staff. Their reasons for discontinuing are likely to be similar to those of the known.

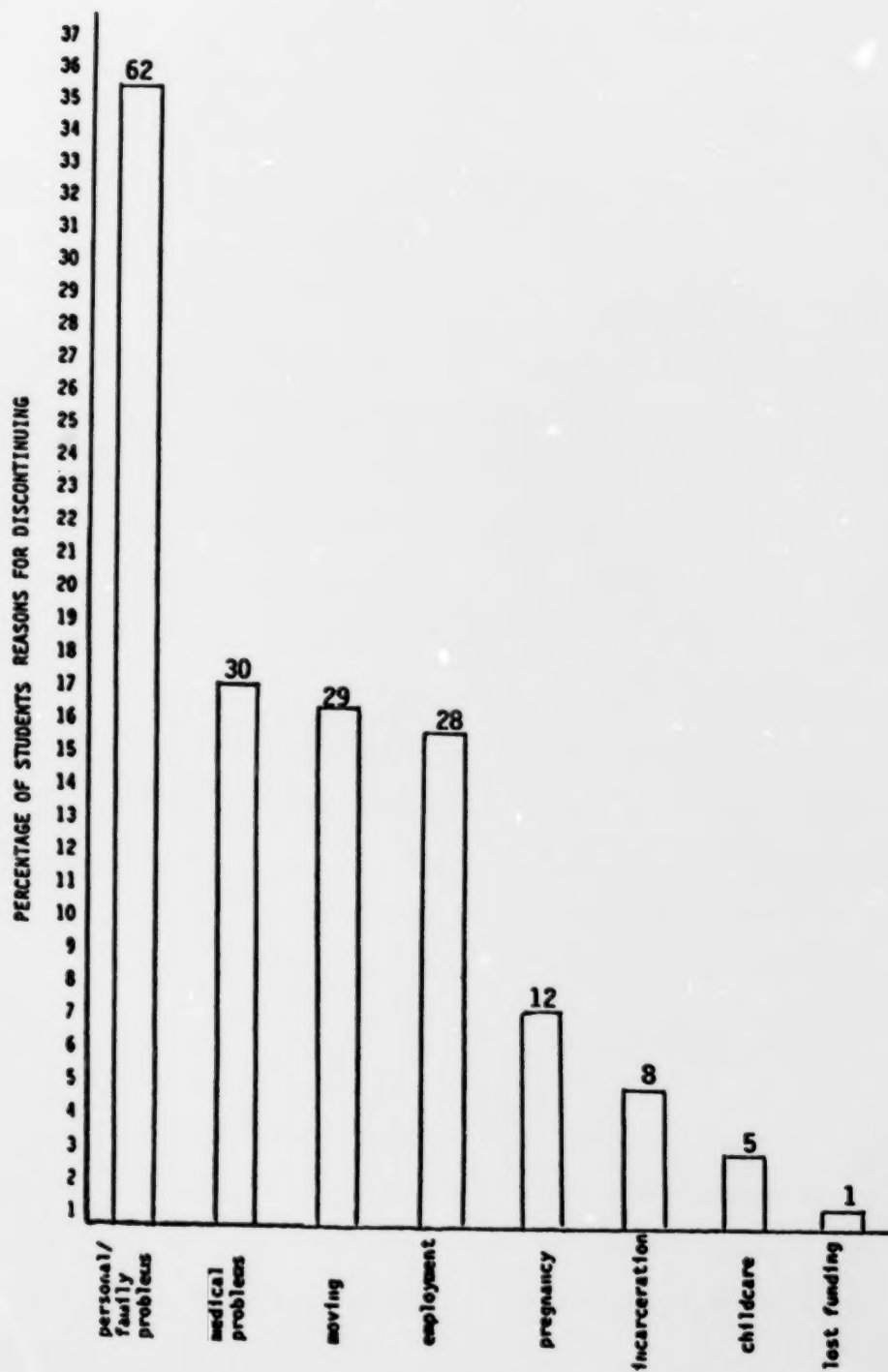
Of the total 404 discontinuing students, 96 (23.8%) were expelled from the program by the college, for such reasons as absenteeism, disruptive behavior, or unproductivity. Of the 175 students who discontinued on their own initiative for known reasons, 62 (35.4%) did so because of

personal and/or family problems. Medical problems caused 30 students (17.1%) to quit the program, while moving accounted for 29 (16.6%) and taking a job for 28 (16.0%).

We find it surprising that problems with childcare caused only five students (2.9%) to drop out. One suspects, however, that some of the personal and family problems may be exacerbated by childcare problems.

Table 2.5 shows the numbers and percentages of students discontinuing for the various reasons.

TABLE 2.5
NSIM STUDENTS DISCONTINUING PROGRAMS



As noted previously, the attendance and retention rates were substantially improved in 1985 - 86 over the previous year. We attribute this to increased attention to entry considerations such as selection and orientation, improved counselling support to students, and instructors being increasingly attentive to the need to provide students with a chance, early in the program, to gain a sense of achievement.

Recommendation 3: That colleges continue to attend to the factors reducing the discontinuation rate.

Saskatoon Region Community College, on the advice of its College Native Advisory Committee, carried out a study of student discontinuation. Other colleges may find the methodology of the study helpful.

III. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The Department, for 1985 - 86, used the same formula for distributing NSIM program funds to college regions as in 1984 - 85. The formula takes account of NSIM population, number of program locations, and previous level of programming (see Table 3.1).

In September, 1985, having analyzed commitments of funds in colleges, it was possible to approve some additional training in some regions. However, almost half a million dollars worth of additional requested training could not be approved for lack of funds.

TABLE 3.1
1985-86 NSIM BUDGET ALLOCATION

College	Program	Support	Total
Carlton Trail	79,120	10,268	89,388
Coteau Range	99,375	12,897	112,272
Cumberland	275,654	35,774	311,428
Cypress Hills	57,916	10,000	67,916
Lakeland	94,878	12,313	107,191
Mistikwa	481,366	62,472	543,838
Parkland	358,634	46,544	405,178
Prairie West	114,250	14,327	129,077
Prince Albert	537,067	70,000	607,067
Regina Plains	516,812	67,072	583,884
Saskatoon Region	394,651	51,218	445,869
South East	205,079	26,615	231,694
Total	3,214,802	420,000	3,634,802

NOTES:

1. The provincial NSIM program budget was increased in 1985-86 to accommodate an increase in training allowance rates and a travel allowance.
2. Allocations are made to colleges by a formula which takes account of NSIM population, program locations and previous program levels.
3. In addition to these allocations, NSIM program funds support training at the MLRVC, and an additional allocation is made to PARCC in order to maintain the program formerly carried on by the P.A.V.C.

At fiscal year end, March 31, 1986, the provincial budget was virtually totally spent, resulting in substantially increased training. It would appear that the present organization of the program, and a degree of stability in it (two years), has enabled colleges to do more effective needs and client identification.

The analysis which follows is based on the government fiscal year, unless otherwise indicated.

Providing information about specific colleges runs the risk of unfair comparisons and unwarranted conclusions. There are variables that relate to quality and quantity of training, type of training, resources provided, and so on.

Our December, 1985 report recommended more consistency, particularly between rural and urban colleges, in the level of program support (e.g., counselling, instructor in-service, instructional resources, etc.) provided. While no systematic approach was taken to implement that recommendation, we found colleges responding to it, with our encouragement, on their own.

Table 3.2 shows actual program expenditures in each college region over the past four years. Table 3.3 illustrates the same for the past three years in graph form.

TABLE 3.2

NSIM COURSE AND ALLOWANCE COSTS BY COLLEGE REGIONS, 1982-83, 83-84,
84-85, 85-86

<u>Community College</u>	<u>82-83</u> ¹	<u>83-84</u> ¹	<u>84-85</u>	<u>85-86</u>
Carlton Trail	67,753	39,424	49,233	46,412
Coteau Range	31,939	63,366	59,401	73,883
Cumberland	145,068	182,311	194,912	209,511
Cypress Hills	31,065	24,049	31,330	59,475
Lakeland	36,543	85,721	70,561	70,678
Mistikwa	464,795	325,546	512,168	513,429
Parkland	355,847	283,938	246,626	334,598
Prairie West	83,848	107,733	87,813	103,307
Prince Albert	394,130	418,592	520,732	1,132,760 ²
Regina Plains	251,198	404,088	434,924	538,041
Saskatoon Region	487,474	96,138	337,336	472,889
South East	104,024	123,987	168,379	219,627
 TOTALS	 2,453,684	 2,154,903	 2,713,415	 3,774,610

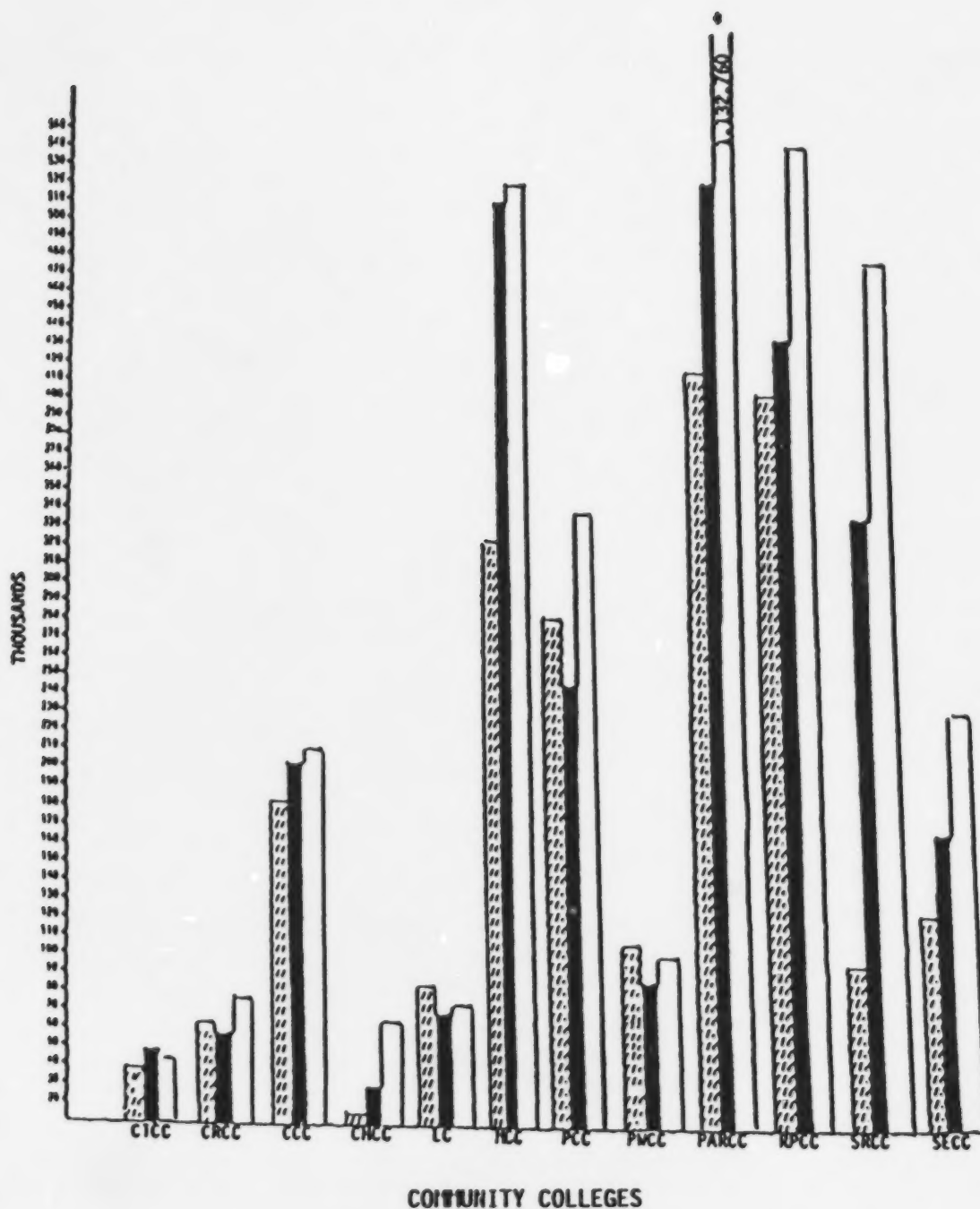
NOTES:

1. In '82-'83 and '83-'84, because there was no mechanism for re allocating surplus funds from one AMNSIS area to another; the provincial budget was underspent.

In September, 1985, the Implementation Team reviewed college expenditures and commitments, and approved additional training in a number of colleges.

2. The disproportionate increase for PARCC reflects the cost of the college assuming the program formerly funded through the Prince Albert Vocational Centre.

TABLE 3.3
 COURSE AND ALLOWANCE COSTS
 By College, 1983-84, 1984-85, 1985-86



* PARCC IN 1985-86 includes expenditure of the former PAVC

Table 3.4 compares college course budgets approved by the Department to the actual costs paid by the Department, for the period July 1, 1985 to March 31, 1986. Colleges' course budgets were more accurate in 1985 - 86 than in the previous year, when costs ranged from 51.8 percent to 119.8 percent of budget. This year the range is 61.4 to 103.1 percent, and the provincial improved from 92.2 to 95.9 percent.

Colleges receive a separate "support allocation," intended to pay for needs identification and support to students in programs. The amount is strictly proportional to the size of program, with a minimum of \$10,000 to a maximum of \$70,000. Colleges are required to have their plan approved for providing this service. They do it in a variety of ways, from assigning responsibility to existing staff, to hiring a worker part-time for part of the year, to having a full-time worker for part of the year or the whole year.

Table 3.5 shows the support allocation and actual charges against it for 1985 - 86.

TABLE 3.4

COMPARING "COLLEGE COURSE BUDGETS" AND "ACTUAL
COURSE COSTS," JULY 1, 1985 to MARCH 31, 1986

	<u>Budgeted Course Costs</u>	<u>Actual Course Costs</u>	<u>% Spent</u>
Carlton Trail	40,447	35,131	86.9
Coteau Range	48,269	29,632	61.4
Cumberland	103,253	99,642	96.5
Cypress Hills	40,178	30,373	75.6
Lakeland	35,200	35,671	101.3
Mistikwa	216,419	203,440	94.0
Parkland	188,552	177,668	94.2
Prairie West	65,542	56,052	85.5
Prince Albert	577,152	558,240	96.7
Regina Plains	243,899	248,255	101.8
Saskatoon Region	221,872	228,638	103.1
South East	116,410	115,830	99.5
Provincial	<u>1,897,192</u>	<u>1,818,572</u>	<u>95.9</u>

TABLE 3.5

COMPARING SUPPORT* STAFFING ALLOCATIONS
TO ACTUAL COSTS, APRIL 1, 1985 to MARCH 31, 1986

<u>Community College</u>	<u>Support Allocation</u>	<u>Actual Expenditure*</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Carlton Trail	10,268	10,268	100.0
Coteau Range	12,897	8,394	65.1
Cumberland	35,774	10,831	30.3
Cypress Hills	10,000	9999.96	100.0
Lakeland	12,313	12,313	100.0
Mistikwa	62,472	60,004	96.1
Parkland	46,544	48,286	103.7
Prairie West	14,827	14,827	100.0
Prince Albert	70,000	70,173	100.3
Regina Plains	67,072	68,785	102.6
Saskatoon Region	51,218	50,083	98.0
South East	26,615	24,857	93.4
	420,000	395,268	94.1

* "Support" staffing allocation provides for needs identification, student counselling, and the cost of CNAC meetings.

IV. CONCLUSION

The December, 1985, evaluation report on the NSIM program described the process of evaluation, begun in the late summer of 1984, as having had positive results. The communication and interaction with and among program personnel (students, instructors, coordinators and administrators) led to actions being taken to improve the program even before the report was written.

Of the sixteen recommendations made in the December, 1985, report only two have not been acted upon, and are repeated in the present report. Both are directed at Advanced Education and Manpower.

The present report documents some increase in program participants; but, more significantly, it shows an almost ten percent increase in attended days. This constitutes, for us, a major indication that increased attention to student selection and orientation, along with student support, is worth the additional time and energy, and, indeed, cost.

The continuing challenge will be to keep alive the discussion and sharing of ideas for ongoing development and improvement of the program.

APPENDIX A: FOLLOW UP ON 1984 - 85 STUDENTS

In the course of the 1984-85 evaluation of the NSIM program we indicated our intent to include a follow-up study of students some months after the program year. Colleges graciously accepted the task of trying to contact their students of the former year in March, 1986. They used the questionnaire which appears at the end of this appendix.

Of the total 1149 student registrations in 1984 - 85, we estimate there were about 149 involved in part-time university and other such training which we did not follow up on. Therefore, the population in question is about 1000 students.

Colleges were able, in March of 1986, to contact 523 students (52.3%) from the previous year, which exceeds our expectation.

Of this number, 113 (21.6%) were employed at the time of follow up - which might be interpreted as permanent employment, and 34 (6.5%) had temporary employment after the program but were no longer employed.

Two hundred and sixty-one 1984 - 85 students (49.9%) were in further training, which speaks well for the capability of ABE programs in colleges to provide a good learning environment. It should be noted that many students are beginning at the 1 - 4 and 5 - 10 level, and that achieving even a Grade 10 requires a commitment of several years.

A total, then, of 374 students (71.5%) were, in March, 1986, employed or in training (see Table 4.1). Sixty-four students (12.2%) were unemployed, of whom 34 (6.5%) had had temporary employment after leaving the program. Eighty-five former students (16.3%) were not looking for employment because of home-making, health, incarceration, etc.

Table 4.2 shows some variation among age groups, with a higher percentage of the younger groups tending to be employed or in training, and a higher percentage of the older groups being unemployed or not seeking work.

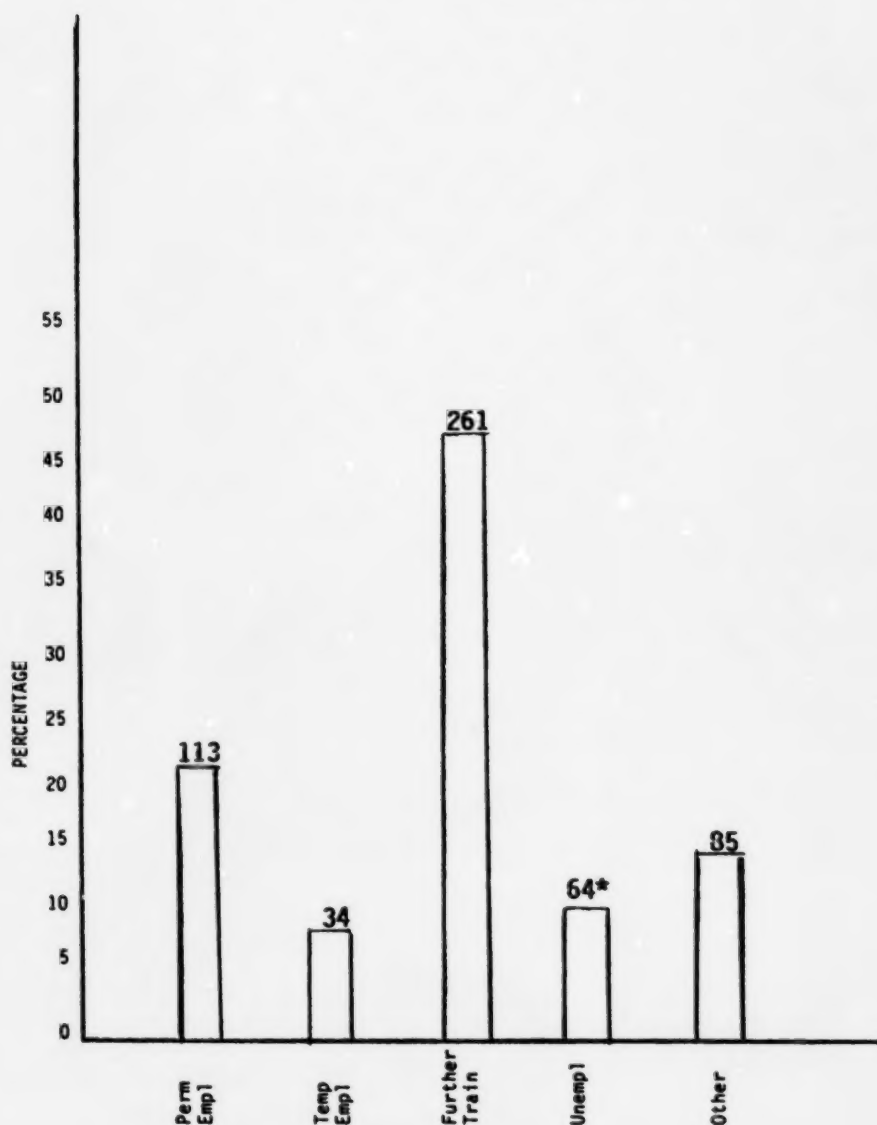
Table 4.3 shows a higher percentage of male students employed and unemployed, and a corresponding greater percentage of females in further training and not seeking work (other).

Conclusion

We have been pleasantly surprised, for two reasons, at the results of the follow-up of 1984 - 85 NSIM students. First, the number actually contacted (523) was much higher than we expected.

Secondly, the number employed or in further training in March, 1986 - almost a year after the 84 - 85 programs ended - is impressively high at 71.5 percent, given the state of the economy at the time.

TABLE 4.1
MARCH, 1986 STATUS OF TOTAL STUDENTS
CONTACTED (523)



* Includes those who found temporary employment after training, but were unemployed in March, 1986.

TABLE 4.2
March, 1986 STATUS OF STUDENTS BY AGE GROUPS

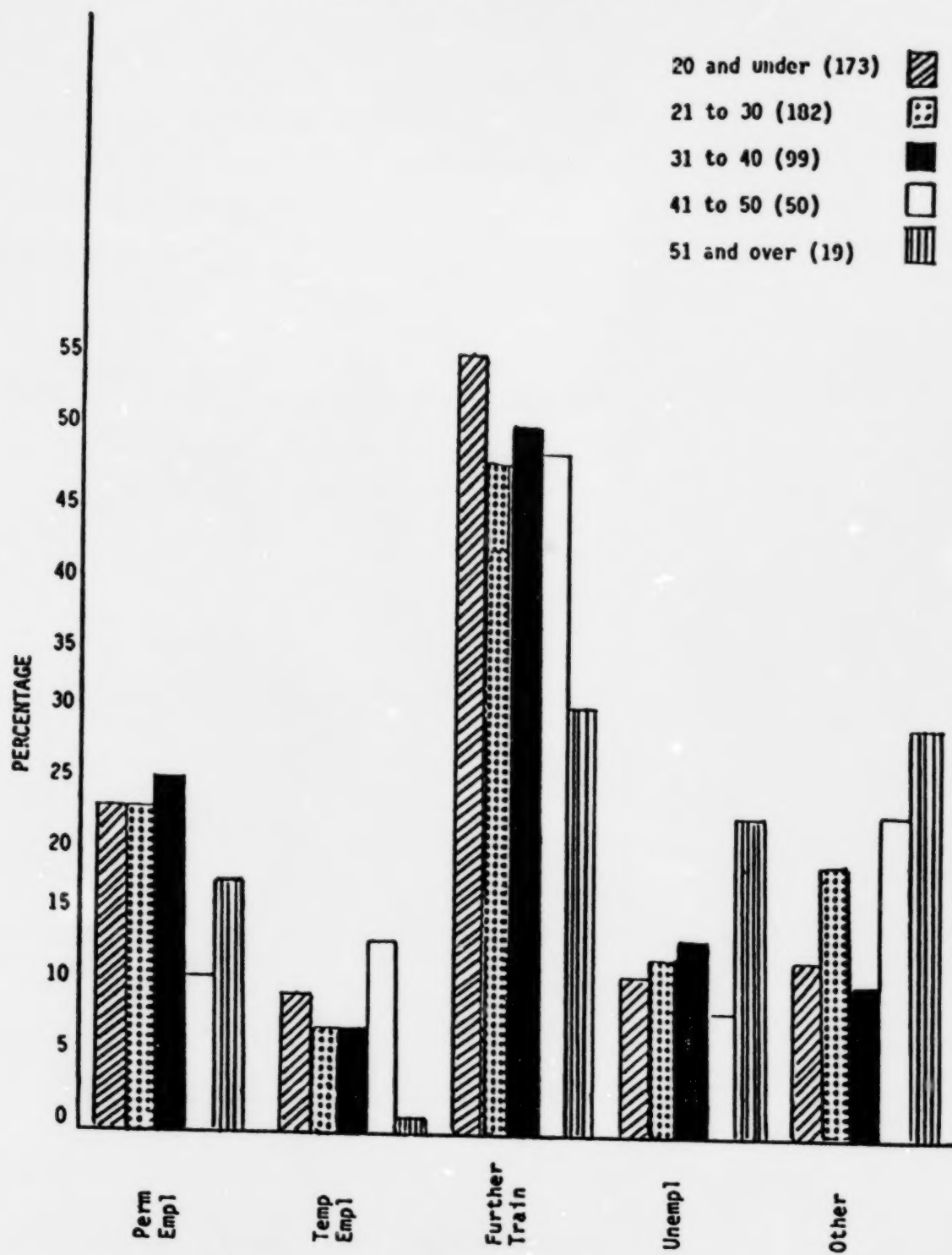
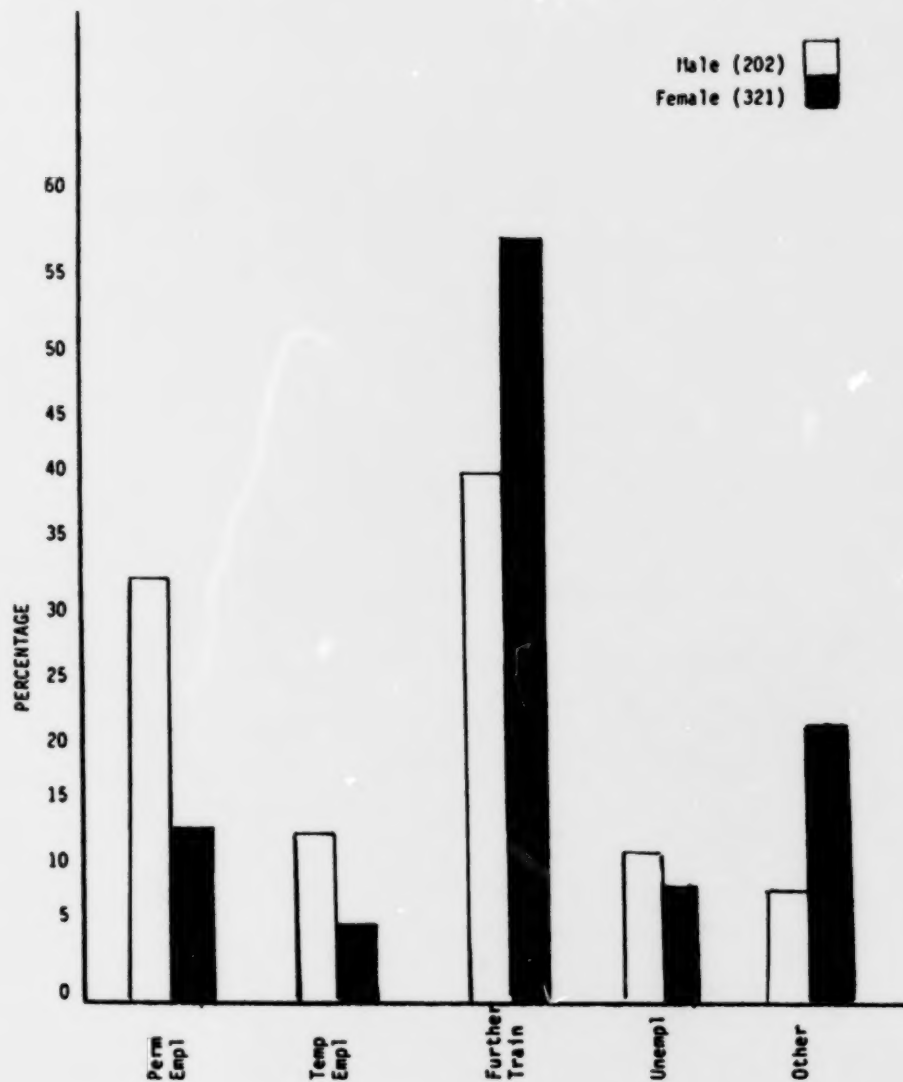


TABLE 4.3
MARCH, 1986 STATUS OF STUDENTS BY SEX



NSIM FOLLOW-UP, for the Program Year '84 - '85

Note: Demographic data can be retrieved from the college student records.

01 Name of College

02 Location of Course

03 Name of Course - Length in Days

04 Student Name

05 Age

20 & under ☐ 21-30 ☐ 31-40 ☐
41-50 ☐ 51+ ☐

06 Sex Male ☐ Female ☐

07 Marital Status

Married ☐ Single ☐ Other ☐

08 Number of Dependents

09 Completed Course Yes ☐ No ☐10 Discontinued Yes ☐ No ☐Reason?

11 Grade Level or Certificate Achieved

Grade Level Certificate

12 Length of Time in Course days

13 Source of Information

14 What did the student do after leaving the course?

☐ Other Training Please Specify

☐ Looked for Work

☐ Other Please Specify

☐ Work Type of Work

☐ Permanent ☐ Temporary

☐ Unknown

15 What is the student doing now?

☐ Work Type of Work

☐ Permanent ☐ Temporary

☐ Other Training Please Specify

☐ Looking for work

☐ Other Please Specify

☐ Unknown

16 If employed, was training important in getting a job? In what way?

17 Does the student have any comments regarding the NSIM Program and, especially, how it might be improved?

DATE DATA COLLECTOR:

(Name)

APPENDIX B: UPDATE ON DECEMBER, 1985 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Evaluation Report - NSIM Program, 1985, included sixteen recommendations. We will repeat each one, here, with commentary on follow-up.

1. That a more systematic and effective means of documenting students' reasons for discontinuing the program be developed and implemented. As indicated in the text of this report, colleges have, in 1985 - 86, consistently indicated the reason for discontinuing on the "Completion, Discontinuation, Withdrawal Report." This adequately addresses the concern.
2. That program personnel make every effort to alleviate the "schooling misgivings" of adults by creating an adult learning environment and climate (see No. 4).
3. That program personnel continue to emphasize and upgrade the process of orientation and selection of students, in order to enhance their success in the program (see No. 4).
4. That instructors be sensitive to students' need to gain an early and continuing sense of achievement.

We attribute the improved attendance and retention rates in 1985-86 to program personnel responding positively to recommendations 2 - 4.

5. That college personnel be made aware of the importance of consistently and adequately completing the Permanent Training Record (Form 401B) for all students.

That we were able to retrieve 56 percent more training records in 1985 - 86 than in 1984 - 85 (see text) indicates the response to this recommendation.

6. That the Department explore the possibility of computerizing all student training records.

The exploration continues. We are not able to determine the extent to which this recommendation influenced the creation of a Training Programs Coordination Branch, which should facilitate computerization.

7. That student records in the Department provide for identifying student progress at grades below the ten level, and that students' achievement at those grade levels be suitably recognized.

There are two issues here:

- a) The number of people achieving a grade ten level needs to be qualified by information indicating at what level they began. Without identifying lower levels of achievement, we are understating the system's achievement. If the Canadian Adult

Achievement Test (CAAT) proves acceptable, and is used on entry and exit, it will provide the information.

- b) Students need meaningful benchmarks to inform and motivate them. Some colleges are issuing their own certificates for levels below the ten.
- 8. That ABE program personnel continue to give importance to the "living and social skills" goals of ABE, by enhancing instructors' and counsellors' skills in fostering personal growth and development.

Program Personnel have responded to this recommendation in a variety of ways: sponsoring instructors for life skills training, having mini-workshops at instructors' meetings, and professional development policy that pays tuition and book costs for appropriate university or institute courses.

- 9. That program coordinators encourage and facilitate instructors' sharing of ideas for recreational/enrichment activities.

Colleges have, in general, increased instructors' opportunities to share ideas by bringing them together several times during the year. This is particularly encouraging in rural colleges, where instructors otherwise tend to be quite isolated.

10. That program coordinators maintain or increase their efforts to have instructors fully informed, involved, and integrally part of the college operation.

We have no information on the implementation of this recommendation.

11. That the Department review the programs it approves with a view to encouraging those which most effectively relate to student employability and employment.

The intent of this recommendation was to encourage the incorporation of work experience, especially in 5 - 10 programs. While there has been some movement in this area, we haven't ascertained how much.

12. That the Department and college program personnel maintain and increase program flexibility in order to accommodate the diverse needs of adult students.

Through the initiative of adult basic educators, a curriculum review project was developed and is being carried forward by Colleges Branch. Its ambition is to satisfy this recommendation.

13. That the Department explore the implications of core funding for Adult Basic Education.

Core funding for ABE has been referred to a Minister's Advisory Committee on College Funding.

14. That the Department provide more evaluative information on textbooks for instructors, and facilitate more exchanging of instructor - developed materials, such as exams and instructional aids.

Colleges Branch has committed personnel to ABE development, including the establishment of a Resource Centre or Clearing House for materials. Assessment of instructional materials will be an integral part of their collection.

15. That the Department, with colleges, develop consistent and equitable levels of program support (e.g., student counselling, work experience, life skills) across the province and, especially, between rural and urban colleges.

Rural colleges have begun to provide more counselling capacity for ABE programs, charging the cost to sponsors. We have encouraged this development.

16. That colleges be required to submit revised budgets, not only when changes in seat purchases occur, but as soon as actual costs (e.g., instructor salary, facility rental, etc.) are known - presumably at least by the time the course starts.

The intent of this recommendation has been largely satisfied by the increased accuracy of college budgets in 1985 - 86. Though there is room for improvement in individual colleges, the system as a whole is reasonably accurate.

Conclusion

In general, college personnel must be commended for their responsiveness to discussions we had with them in the course of the 1984 - 85 year and to subsequent recommendations. Besides information we have from people reporting on their activity, 1985 - 86 statistics establish that significant improvements have been made to the program, by an increase of almost ten percent in attendance and retention rates.